



St George's RCVA Primary School

Bells Close, Lemington, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6XX

URN 108499

Inspection dates: 19 - 20 September 2013
Lead inspector: Mary Tate

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	PREVIOUS INSPECTION:	Satisfactory	3
	THIS INSPECTION:	Good	2
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	CATHOLIC LIFE:	Good	2
	COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:	Good	2
	RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:	Requires Improvement	3

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St George's School is a good Catholic school.

- The Catholic Life of the school is good and pupils benefit greatly from it. They take advantage of the many opportunities the school provides.
- Parents and governors hold the school in high regard and are appreciative of the school's values and ethos.
- There are very good relationships between staff and pupils.
- Collective Worship is good and children are becoming skilled in planning, leading and evaluating acts of worship.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and has identified clear points for improvement.
- Behaviour is good and children feel safe and secure at school.

It is not yet outstanding school because:

- Some teaching still requires improvement.
- Procedures to check the quality of teaching are in place but lack rigour and clarity.
- The practice of children leading Collective Worship is not consistent between classes.
- Time is not always provided for pupils to improve their work after it has been marked by the teacher.
- The school does not involve stakeholders in evaluating the Catholic Life of the school but plans are in place to do so this year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOOL

- St George's is a much smaller than average sized primary school in the outer west area of Newcastle.
- It serves the parish of St George and approximately 30% of children are baptised Roman Catholics.
- There are very small numbers in some year groups, with some considerable differences in the profile of pupils across year groups.
- The very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs requiring support through school action is above average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is below average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Raise standards in Religious Education by:
 - Improving levels of expectation for progress across the school, especially for the higher ability pupils, so that the pace of progress accelerates, and all pupils are challenged and supported appropriately.
 - Improving marking and feedback for learning to impact on pupils' progress. Ensure children know how well they are doing and are given time to respond to improvement points.
 - Improving the precision for identifying focus areas when monitoring quality of teaching, to ensure that the impact of support and challenge is followed up in a clear cycle of improvement.

FULL REPORT

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

2

- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is good.

- They take on responsibilities enthusiastically, for example by being house captains, peer mentors, librarians, playground buddies or school councillors.
- Pupils respond to the needs of those beyond the school and can articulate their views with confidence, explaining the purpose of fundraising for various charities such as Harvest Festival, Lemington Festival, carol singing, 'local clean up' and Puffing Billy Project.
- They take full advantage of the many opportunities offered to them and can articulate how the school is helping them to become better people.
- Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of key celebrations throughout the liturgical year both in school and the parish community. They understand that religious belief and spiritual values are important for many people.
- Good behaviour is underpinned by very good moral, social and cultural development.
- The school keeps a record of events to celebrate their Catholic Life with 'Our Journey of Faith' book.

The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is good.

- St George's is a welcoming friendly community with a strong family ethos, there is a strong sense of belonging, and all are respected and cared for.
- Excellent relationships and the close cooperation of the whole school team are key strengths of the school.
- The school's Catholic character is effectively reflected through displays and artefacts in the learning environment and the creation of sacred spaces around the school; it is a prayerful community.

- Parents are supportive of the Catholic Life of the school and they feel the strength of the school to be that, 'it lives out its mission statement and gospel values'.
- Clear policies and procedures are in place, which provide the highest levels of pastoral support to pupils.
- School has already in place plans to develop a sense of vocation during their annual mission in October 2013.

The leadership and management of the Catholic Life of the school are good.

- The headteacher, staff and governors have a very strong sense of purpose and commitment to the Catholic Mission of the school.
- The headteacher communicates a strong sense of spiritual purpose, with a focus on promoting high standards and the fullest, personal development of the pupils.
- Good leadership ensures a very inclusive and welcoming community where the Gospel message of sharing and caring is seen in action.
- Systems to monitor and evaluate the Catholic Life of the school have been introduced but have not yet had time to have impact. The governing body is supportive but does not sufficiently hold leaders to account in this area
- The school has very successful strategies for engaging with parents and carers; they have a clear understanding of the school's mission and are highly supportive of it.
- Governors promote and appreciate the Catholic Life of the school and are committed to the school's mission and ethos.
- The school has correctly identified the need to develop governors' self-evaluation this year and has clear plans to implement these.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2

- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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The pupils' response to and participation in Collective Worship is good.

- Pupils are able to participate fully in a number of key events and liturgies which celebrate the liturgical year.
- They are at ease when praying with their school and parish community and they are developing a good awareness of a variety of forms of prayer.
- They participate with a good level of interest and engagement. Their response in both small and large prayerful gatherings is respectful, reverent, and reflective.
- Older pupils eagerly lead prayers in class and school liturgies. They understand that there are different forms of liturgies and have a good understanding of the Church's liturgical year.
- Pupils are acquiring skills in preparing and leading prayer and Collective Worship. With support they are becoming skilled in the use of scripture, religious artefacts, hymns and other forms of prayer through their class 'liturgy box'.

The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and well resourced.
- A regular rhythm of prayer is built into the daily life of the school.
- Parents and parishioners join the children for liturgy in church and have begun to participate in class liturgies this school year.
- Staff are skilled in planning and leading worship and encourage pupils to lead and to write their own prayers.
- Older pupils prepare, lead and participate in liturgies with enthusiasm and increasing confidence. They know what constitutes the various elements of worship and regularly lead Collective Worship.
- The headteacher models and leads high quality Collective Worship and children enjoy helping to organise and lead whole school worship.

- A prayer area in each classroom has a positive impact on the quality of prayer.
- A newly created 'prayer garden' offers pupils a quiet place for thought and reflection.
- Pupils participate in the school and parish linked sacramental preparation programme which has a positive impact upon their on-going spiritual development.
- Collective Worship contributes positively to the spiritual, moral and personal development of pupils.
- Children take part in worship with their wider diocesan family through cluster events, Big Sing and years five and six festival days.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is good.

- Leaders and managers provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon the Church's liturgical year, seasons, rites and symbols through the provision of quality worship experiences.
- They provide opportunities for staff to worship together and have prioritised staff training in liturgical formation and spiritual development.
- Leaders ensure that the pupils have the best possible sacramental preparation, working closely with the parish priest and catechists.
- Good strategies are in place to monitor many aspects of Collective Worship and as a result the quality of Collective Worship continues to improve.
- The school does not yet seek the views of stakeholders in evaluating the quality of Collective Worship but this is identified as an action point. The school has correctly identified the need to seek the views of stakeholders in evaluating the quality of Collective Worship and is identified in the development plan.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

3

- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education
- How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

3

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education requires improvement.

Due to the state of transition in level expectations across all diocesan schools, the current averages for attainment and progress are not reliable benchmarks. Therefore no judgement will be made in this report against diocesan averages for either attainment or progress.

- Pupils have good attitudes and want to do their best.
- They talk with enthusiasm about their work in Religious Education and are proud of their special books.
- Work seen during the inspection shows children make progress with their learning.
- Differentiated work is not always provided to support and challenge pupils. As a result, the pace of learning requires improvement.
- Behaviour is good and pupils are keen to do well.

The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education requires improvement.

- Relationships between children, teachers and support staff are warm and are a strength of the school.
- Lessons are carefully planned but teachers do not consistently use assessment to plan differentiated activities that appropriately challenge all pupils, especially the more able.
- In the best lessons, questioning is usually used well to probe pupils' understanding and challenge them further, and these lessons are generally well paced and hold pupils' interest throughout, but this is not consistent throughout school.
- Anomalies with teacher assessment indicate that not all staff are confident with levelling work accurately.
- There is insufficient use of self-assessment as a means of improving pupil understanding of what they need to do to improve. The school has identified the need

to develop self-assessment this year using 'I can' statements.

- Marking and feedback are performed regularly but do not impact on pupil progress. Pupils are not given time to respond to feedback.
- Some examples of the levelling of work seen during the inspection were not accurate.

The leadership and management of Religious Education requires improvement.

- The headteacher is committed to driving improvement and has high expectations.
- Clear and precise monitoring systems are now in place.
- Areas for improvement are clearly identified in the school improvement plan but they have not yet had the chance to become embedded or have any impact.
- Recent Diocesan developments in assessment procedures, including guidance on standards of attainment and levelling children's work, have not yet been introduced.
- The governing body is beginning to be more informed about the school's performance in Religious Education and what needs to be done to ensure continuous improvement in standards. They discharge their statutory and canonical duties well and understand the challenges faced by the school.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:

2

CATHOLIC LIFE:

2

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

2

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

2

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

3

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

3

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

3

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

3

SCHOOL DETAILS

Unique reference number	108499
Local authority	Newcastle

This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese, (c.f. Code Canon Law, 804, 806), and for the Governing Body of the school (Education Act 2005, Section 48). The inspection schedule follows criteria set by the National Board of Advisers and Inspectors.

Type of school	Primary
Chair of governors	Fr James Keane
Head teacher	Mrs Jennifer Gill
Date of previous school inspection	9 - 10 June 2011
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